

WASHINGTON, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1905.

## EMOTIONAL DRAMAS PREDOMINATE IN CHRISTMAS WEEK OFFERINGS



The Theaters Will Celebrate the Holiday Season by Presenting Exceptionally Strong Entertainments.

Washington is promised an unusually strong fortnight of entertainment for the Christmas holidays, including almost every variety of dramatic entertainment.

Mrs. Fiske, undoubtedly one of America's greatest actresses, presents a strong emotional play that is new to Washington, and is followed the next week at the same theater by Madame Sarah Bernhardt in a repertoire of her greatest roles. Blanch Walsh will be seen for the first time in her new Clyde Fitch drama which is a decided change in the character of her work, and yields the house to Lew Fields and his own company, in their big metropolitan hit, "It Happened in Nördland." "The College Widow" one of the cleverest, if not the cleverest, of George Ade's comedies, is followed at the same theater by two of George Bernard Shaw's best comedies presented by Arnold Daly, the man who introduced the Shaw vogue into this country.

Since the opening of the season, Washington has not had a two weeks to compare with the coming fortnight and it is exceedingly unlikely that an equally strong array of attractions will again be crowded into so short a period during the present theatrical year.

THE BURGLARY SCENE IN "LEAH KLESCHNA"



Ade's Picturesque English.

Miss Gertrude Quinlan has one of the particularly prominent parts in "The College Widow," that of Flora Wiggins, "a prominent waitress." Flora is a combination of several of Ade's fancies which have been separately elaborated in his "Fables in Slings" characters. The original, who bore a visual and mental resemblance to Flora, was a proud and unbending cashier in an all-night restaurant in Chicago. This place was freely patronized by those whose work on newspapers kept them up late, such patronage including quite a number of rough-and-ready comedians. The cashier wore cheap jewelry and spoke picturesquely atrocious English, doing both with the affected manners of a grande dame. One night when she had been under the fire of a long string of bantering customers Ade strolled up to pay his check. The last man ahead had given the cashier an awful shot, at which she had merely sniffed. "You are not angry, are you?" said Ade. "Now do you know," said Haughty Harriett, "that is something I never get."

have not named so far, but which they call an American play of negro military life.

New York is to have a new "Players' Club." It will be called "The American Playgoers," and is being engineered by such well-known people as Amelia Bingham, Mary Shaw, Mrs. Fernandez, and other prominent theatrical people.

Joseph Weber and his company are again in New York after a tour of the principal cities. Rehearsals for a new musical piece by Edgar Smith and Maurice Levi have begun.

## Harry Lehr's Dog Dinner Will Be Simply Outclassed

Members of the Blanch Walsh Company have been spending every moment the last week not taken up in depicting the remarkable scenes of Clyde Fitch's "The Woman in the Case." In elaborating and perfecting plans for an event that bids fair to take on the importance of an elaborate social function. The engagement of Miss Walsh at the National begins with a Christmas matinee, and the event referred to will take place on the stage of that house immediately after the performance. It is a Christmas tree in honor of Leo, Miss Walsh's beautiful St. Bernard dog, who came into the company a short time ago in a very quiet manner, and who is now one of the most important and popular members of the organization.

When John B. Reynolds, Messrs. Wagners & Kemper's representative with Miss Walsh's company, proposed the affair it was looked upon as a jest on his part. Little by little, however, the scheme became more of a serious matter, until now nothing else is talked of between the acts or in the wings. With the true spirit of the season, Miss Walsh, in issuing her invitations, will remember the less fortunate, and in spite of the fact that Leo came from

Newport and belongs to the same set that made up the guests of Harry Lehr's celebrated dog dinner, social distinctions will be set entirely aside and the canines of the humblest super or stage hand of the National will mingle with the pampered pets of several members of Miss Walsh's company, and of a few non-professional friends of the star who are now in the city.

Manager Harry Rapley will provide the tree, which is to be a blaze of many colored electric lights, and trimmed with festoons of raw chopped beef instead of the conventional pop corn decorations. Lamb chops, chicken legs, and other delicacies will also hang from the limbs, and after the distribution of presents will be served among Leo's guests. Miss Walsh is urging members of her company to give more than ordinary attention to appropriateness in the selection of gifts, and has reminded them that a dog whose surroundings are of the humblest would appreciate a warm blanket more than a jeweled collar. As a result of this advice many sensible articles, such as packages of dog biscuit, cake of flea soap, and bottles of mange cure have been provided for an occasion that promises to be one of the most important social events of the season in dogdom.

## Stage Gossip From Gotham

By JAMES GRANT THURSTON.

NEW YORK, Dec. 22.—By all tradition the week before Christmas is the dullest in the theatrical season. Santa Claus and Christmas shopping as a rule occupy the minds of the people to the exclusion of Thespis, but the week which has just come to a close has proven an exception. In all the principal theaters the "capacity" sign has been common, while the others have shown very satisfactory audiences. All in all it has been the most satisfactory week before Christmas week New York has seen in many seasons. Broadway has been crowded with actors and actresses who have come in off the road to spend a few days along the great white way during the holiday dullness. David Higgins, Digby Bell, Harry Fields, Joe Miron, Nat Willis, Joe West, Kate Kendall, Fred Montague, Elsie Janie, Elsie Fay, Nellie Beaumont, Florence Bingley, and many others were among the many seen in the holiday throng. This has been a week also of the closing of New York engagements and many new attractions will be seen at the theaters next week. Among the days which close their metropolitan engagements will be those of "The Marriage of William Ashe," at the Garrick; Thomas W. Ross in "A Fair Exchange," at the Liberty; Virginia Harned with "La Belle Marsellaise," at the Knickerbocker, and William Collier in "On the Quiet," at the Criterion.

The most important engagement which closes tonight is that of Sarah Bernhardt. The great French actress closes tonight the most successful engagement she has ever had in New York and now starts on what bids fair to be a

triumphal tour of the country. Even the most intense patriotism cannot dim the fact that Mme. Bernhardt is away and beyond any actress or actor that has been seen in New York in at least a generation. Her art is perfect and she has been great enough to bring with her as her support a company of splendid artists who are worthy to appear on the same stage with her. In connection with Mme. Bernhardt's tour the almost incredible statement is made that the syndicate theaters throughout the country have closed their doors to her, and that in one State at least, Texas, she may have to play in a tent because all the theaters are under syndicate control and will not permit the use of their theaters to any attraction which has not paid tolls to the syndicate. If this is true it would seem that the time is at hand when the theatrical trust should by some means be taught that the public which supports it has some rights and that an attempt to prevent the people of any community able to pay for it from enjoying the art of Bernhardt, is liable to be met with reprisals against that portion of the trust's outfit most keenly alive to attack-the-pocket.

An interesting bit of gossip concerning Mme. Bernhardt's stay in New York is that she has been delighted with the acting of Margaret Anglin, and that in the spring the American and French artists will join in the Melicande. It is to be hoped that the report is true.

New plays have been scarce this week. E. S. Willard is entitled to credit for the only premier of import-

ance for the week. And this was simply a little curtain raiser in the shape of the dramatization of one of Kipling's short stories, "The Man Who Was." The one-act play made a distinct success in London, where Bernhardt Tree produced it, and was as successful here under Mr. Willard's presentation. It lends to the natural inquiry, why more of Kipling's graphic stories of Indian life have not been dramatized. There were during the week two interesting revivals, Miss Amelia Bingham and her company gave a modernized version of the old standard, "East Lynne," by Lawrence Marshall, and Odette Tyler, with her company, presented "The Heart of Maryland" to a large and appreciative audience.

The Criterion Theater, on Wednesday afternoon, was the scene of a rather remarkable gathering. William Collier invited the members of the "Juvenile Pinatore" company, with which he started his theatrical career, to attend the matinee, and after the performance to enjoy a Christmas tea and a Christmas tree with him. All of the company who possibly could get there were in attendance, and it is doubtful if there will be a merrier Christmas gathering in New York than that was. Among those who were present besides Mr. Collier were Charles MacGeachy, manager of the old company; Arthur Dunn, Grace Fikins, Jennie Dunn, Emma Hamilton, Sallie Cohen, Harry Russell, William G. Newman, Tommy Russell, Otto Ashstrom, and Frankie Bishop.

The question of the problem play is an interesting one to actors and it is

one which is discussed with a good deal of interest in the profession. The general view held by many of the leading men of the profession is well expressed by Kyrie Bellew in a statement which he recently made. Mr. Bellew says: "When the church and state are ready to accept a theater as a public educator an ethical purpose will be necessary to every play. But just so long as a theater is regarded merely as a business, is ignored by the state and frowned upon by the church the commerce of the drama is likely to foster the purely amusement side of the question and to ignore ethics entirely. As a matter of fact, I am inclined to think that every play teaches a lesson of some sort if one only will look into it deeply enough, though the so-called plays of certain of our writers on social themes deliberately teach the wrong one and are abhorrent and dangerous. All that you have to do nowadays is to tell your public that your plays might teach them a lesson and it is wonderful with what unanimity they will transfer their patronage to some meretricious amusement in some music hall."

Frederick Thompson, of Dundee & Thompson, will sail for Europe early next month to establish a hippodrome on the lines of the New York establishment in Paris and London. It is proposed to establish an international circuit of hippodromes.

A peculiar feature of the contract with Le Domino Rouge, the mysterious masked dancer, who appears this week in vaudeville in New York is the insurance of her feet. The clause reads: "It is mutually agreed that should 'Le

Domino Rouge' sustain any injuries to her ankles or feet during this engagement through any accidents due to conditions of the stage floor or by the neglect of any employee of the party of the second part said party of the second part agrees to forfeit the sum of \$10,000."

Olga Nethersole, having composed her differences with Clyde Fitch as to the matter of royalties, will give her first performance of "Sapho" at a Christmas matinee. "The Babes and the Baron," an English musical comedy, will be the Christmas attraction at the Lyric Theater, following Mme. Bernhardt's engagement. The piece is to be lavishly produced and acted by a company which includes Fred Walton, Junie McCree, Henry Norman, Will Archer, Maud Lambert, Louise Wesley and Lillian Coleman.

Grace George will take "The Marriage of William Ashe" with her entire New York company on her Western tour, which opens in Chicago next week.

Ethel Barrymore will give her first performance of J. M. Barrie's new comedy, "Alice Sit by the Fire," at the Criterion Monday.

Lillian Russell has gone to Europe for a rest after having played a long season in vaudeville. Her appearances were confined to the Proctor circuit, and it is said she received \$20,000 for the season.

Cole and Johnson, the famous negro song writers, are to be sent on the road as co-stars early in February. They have written their own play, which they

## The Girl Burglar in Real Life

Until Mrs. Fiske produced "Leah Kleschna" the girl burglar was a stranger to the stage. Playwrights had found fruitful subjects in clothes of the male sex, from the Spike Hennesseys of the melodramas to the gentlemanly robbers of the better class theaters. It remained for C. M. S. McLellan, author of "Leah Kleschna," to give to the theater a woman who gained her livelihood by aid of the jimmy and the dark lantern.

Though Leah Kleschna is new to the stage, her prototypes have been and are sufficiently frequent in real life to make one wonder why no dramatist had taken one of them for his subject before. Histories of crime record many instances in which women have been burglars. To men whose lives have been spent in running down criminals, the woman burglar is a familiar type. She is seldom found in the prison records, however, as she is harder to catch than the man burglar. The quick wit and intuition characteristic of her sex have led her out of many a trap which the best detectives have carefully set for her. Sex has helped her, too, out of many a crisis, when publicity would have meant scandal for her victim.

Golden Hair Furnished Clue.

Chicago has had a number of women burglars, but as a rule they have been of the lowest strata or thieves and did not play for big stakes. Fifteen years ago residents of the south side of that city were alarmed by a series of bur-

glaries in which a mysterious woman figured. The first warning that the police had that a woman was connected in the robberies was due to the vanity of the woman herself. The robbery was committed during the earlier evening, when the owner of the house and his wife were at the theater, and the two servants were out. The burglars had ample time to ransack the house and the fair member of the gang found leisure, while going through a dressing table, to make use of a comb belonging to the mistress of the house. The comb, not being of value, was left behind, and to it there clung several long golden tresses. The victim of the robbery happened to be a brunette. The detective looked out for golden-haired girls after that, but she either dyed her hair or sought fresh fields of labor, for she was never caught.

Sadie McKinstry, or "Vassar Sadie," as she was known among the powers that prey, was one of the cleverest thieves whom the New York detective force was ever called on to cope with. Sadie's work was what is called the "high heel" class. That is, she dressed stylishly and had a manner that made it easy to pass for what she represented herself to be—a Vassar girl. At an early period of her career, she is said to have been a waitress in a Poughkeepsie hotel and to have been discharged from there for stealing. While there she assimilated enough of the ways and manners of the college girl to be able to impersonate one successfully. She also